Mosman Evening College.

An Introduction to Buddhism.

The Historical Background of Buddhism.

Ancient Indian Civilization.

Mohenjo-Daro and Harrapa and the Dravidian civilization.

The evidence of Siva and systems of "yoga" from the ruins.

The meaning of the term "Yoga".

The Coming of the Indo-European Peoples - the "Aryans"

The relation between the Aryans and the Ancient Greeks, eg "Dyaus Pitar" = "Sky Father" = "Jupiter".

Parallels between Sanskrit and modern European languages, ie: "vac-" = "voice"; "pad-" = "foot" (as in "pedestrian"); "sarpena" = "serpent"; "mtr" = "measure", (as in metre.)

The Vedas: the ancient scriptures of the Indo-European peoples; the Oral Tradition; the development of the Caste System: Brahmins, Kings, Warriors, Merchants, etc. The Vedic Gods and rituals of sacrifice.

The Upanishads: the esoteric philosophy of Hinduism. The development of the doctrine of Atman and Brahman. The central role of meditation and the importance of "Brahmacharya" [conduct befitting the seeker of Brahman].

The chaotic complexity of "Hinduism".

Reincarnation, Karma, Maya, Moksa - the grand insight of the Indian Rishis. The role of the "guru".

Important Writers on Buddhism.
Alan Watts was an Englishman who lived mostly in the USA. The son of a vicar, he became interested in an early age in the teachings of Zen Buddhism and in Oriental thought in general. Although in his later life he did not *manifest* the life of Dharma, he was an *exceptional* writer who presented the gist of the Eastern teachings in a very accessible way. He is *compulsory* for all students who wish to read about Buddhism. Among his best books are: *The Way of Zen* (available in Penguin); *The Book on the Taboo against Knowing Who You Are*, and *Beyond Theology: The Art of Godmanship*. All these books are easy to read and are highly recommended.

These and many other books can be purchased at: The Adyar Bookshops, Mezannine Level, State Theater Building, City, or in Archer Street Chatswood, near Victoria. They can be borrowed from the Theosophical Library, 484 Kent St, City.

The Canon of Hindu Scripture.
This is called the Veda, meaning "wisdom" or "knowledge" (cd "vidya"). They are as follows:

1. The Rg Veda - The Veda of Hymns;
2. Sama Veda - The Veda of Chants;
3. Yajur Veda - The Veda of Sacrifice;
3. Atharva Veda - magic charms and "Mantras".

Each Veda is then divided into three strata: *samhita*, collections of hymns, chants and magical formulae; *brahmanas*, expository texts concerned with the minutae of sacrifice; and *upanishads*; [lit "to sit up close" ie to the teacher], speculative metaphysical texts about which more later.

The religion of the Rig Veda is comparable to the religions of the other Indo-European peoples, but as it developed in time it became something quite different to the faiths of other lands. The Gods tend to coalesce into one another - "The call it Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Fire;...what is but One is called by the wise by manifold names...".

Sacrifice.
As Hinduism developed it became more preoccupied with sacrificial rites. The sacrifice represented and "became" the creative process by which the Universe came into being. This is an example of "magic thinking" which was paralleled in all archaic cultures at one time or another; it represents the outlook of "sympathetic magic" wherein a thing, because it is "like" or "represents" something else, *becomes* the thing it represents.

The Upanishads.
Next we come to the Upanishads, which were developed historically later than the Vedas. These collectively comprise the "Vedanta", meaning "the end of knowledge", in the senses of "the end to which knowledge [vidya] is directed", the "last word", and also, "beyond knowledge" or beyond the limits of knowledge.

The Rishis and seers of the Vedic tradition.

Atman and Brahman: the Supreme Identity.
"This indescribable reality, the Real of the Real, reveals itself in a flash: the astonished mortal realizes himself as immortal, unconditioned, beyond space and time and causation; and so `whoso knows Brahman becomes the whole Universe'.
"To become Brahman is to merge into the infinite Being in which all sense of ego, all sense of separate selfhhod is lost.

Even as the rivers flowing find their home
In the ocean, leaving name and form behind,
So does the man who knows, from name and form released,
Draw near the divine person who is beyond the Beyond.

Mosman Evening College.

An Introduction to Buddhism.

The Beginning of Buddha's Ministry.

After his Nirvana, the Buddha remained silent and in the same location for forty nine days. During this time he reflected on the fact that his discovery was "profound, deep, and difficult to fathom". He also thought about the fact that if he were to attempt to teach the truth which he had discovered he would in all likelihood be misunderstood. However, he decided that for the sake of beings with only a little defilement, those who would perish without the good Law, that he would set his teaching forth.

The first persons to whom he preached were the ascetics with whom he had originally joined, but who had abandoned him when he had forsaken ascetism. He approached them and told them that he had discovered the Supreme, the Ultimate, and the Deathless. His demeanour, radiance, and certainty convinced them that he was the Awakened One, and before them, in the Deer Park at Sarnath, he "set in motion the Wheel of the Dharma."

The Four Noble Truths.

The truth of *dukkha*: life is *"woeful"*.

This term is generally mistranslated as "sorrow" or "painfulness", which is true but too narrow to really convey the meaning.
Dukkha arises when we lose that which is dear to us, receive that which is painful to us, not get what we want, are separated from our loved ones, and suffer the viscissitudes of life, illness, old age, and death.
The Buddha acknowledges that ordinary life may afford much happiness, but that this happiness is in itself *dukkha*, being insubstantial and liable to dissapear at any moment. This also applies to the visions arising from trances (*dhyana*) and spiritual practises.
Dukkha may be viewed from three aspects: (1) *dukkha* as ordinary suffering; (2) *dukkha* as produced by change (*viparinama-dukkha)* (3) *dukkha* as conditioned states.

The truth of *Samudaya*: the arising of sorrow.

"It is this thirst (*tanha*) which produces re-existence and re-becoming, and which is bound up with passionate greed, and which finds fresh delight now here and now there; namely, thirst for pleasure, thirst for existence and becoming, and thirst for non-existence or annihilation." (Rahula, p 29)

"Unlike you, I am not addicted to existence" - the Buddha.

The Truth of *Nirodha*: the cessation of *Dukkha*.

This is synonomous with *nibbana*, that being "the extinction of selfish desires", the realization of the "unconditioned", the "unborn", the "unmanifest".

This is an *esoteric* realization in the sense that it can only be known from "within", ie by seeing it for oneself.

The Eightfold Path, *Magga*.

1. Right Understanding *(Samma Ditthi)*.
2. Right Thought *(Samma Sankappa)*.
3. Right Speech *(Samma Vaca)*.
4. Right Action *(Samma Kammanta)*.
5. Right Livelihood *(Samma ajiva)*.
6. Right Effort *(Samma vayama)*.
7. Right Mindfulness *(Samma Sati)*
8. Right Concentration *(Samma Samdhi)*.

The three essentials of Buddhist training are: Ethical conduct (*sila)*; Mental discipline (*samadhi*); and wisdom (*panna)*.
The precepts for lay persons are to abstain from: cheating, lying, stealing, getting inebriated and illicit sexaul relations.

The Chain of Conditioned Origination: Everything Depends upon Conditions.

The *Paticca samuppada* is perhaps the most distinctly Buddhist of all philosophical doctrines.

This is as follows:

Ignorance conditions volitional actions; which condition consciousness; which conditions mental and physical phenomena (or name-and-form); which conditions the six sense faculties (including mind); which conditions sensory or mental contact; which conditions sensation; which conditions desire or "thirst"; which conditions clinging (addiction etc); which conditions the process of becoming; which conditions birth; which conditions : decay, death, old age, etc etc.

References: *What the Buddha Taught*, Walpola Rahula.
Buddhism: An Outline of its Teachings and Schools, H.W. Schumann, Quest Books.

The Four Noble Truths of Buddha.

WITH SOME EXPLANATORY COMMENTS BY JPS.

Dukkha: That Life is Woeful.

All of life exhibits the following characteristics: that we may be separated from that which pleases us, or forced to endure that which is unpleasant; that all manifest existence is transient and must soon pass away; that worldly joy, though possible, is short-lived and fragile; and that even the pleasure resulting from spiritual states and *dhyana* is subject to change and decay.

Tannha: That the Cause of Woe is Craving.

Desire born of ignorance causes us to continually seek pleasure and satisfaction in the objects and experiences of the world; now here, now there, we seek joy in that which is inherently unstable, unworthy of devotion, and transient. We seek to continue, to have "more" of this and "more" of that; or we seek to escape from existence altogether, to avoid the fact of our emodied existence. It is this continual craving or "will to be or have" that is the cause of woe.

Nirodha: The Truth Of Cessation.

As suffering has a cause, it also has a cure: namely the complete cessation of the selfish craving for experiences and existence. When such craving has ceased, when it is abandoned and given up altogether, with it goes the notion of "self" as an abiding or priveleged entity who is other than life. This abandonment, this cessation, is the doorway to "Nibanna", which is known as the Deathless, the Imperishable, and the Place of Refuge. The Nirvana of the Buddhas is the realization of the ultimate aim, purpose, and meaning of human existence; therefore for the Tathagata (i.e., "one who has gone thus") there is no more rebirth.

Magga: the Eightfold Path of Cessation.

Although it is wrong to regard Nirvana as a "result" of a "cause" - for in so doing we relegate the Awakening to the realm of dependent origination - neverthelss there is a way in which we might live so that the realization of the Nirvana of the Buddhas is not impeded by adverse conditions. This way is summarized as the Noble Eightfold Path of the Buddha, consisting of the following:

1. Right View (*samma ditthi*)
2. Right Thought (*samma sankappa*)
3. Right Speech (*samma vaca*)
4. Right Action (*samma kammanta*)
5. Right Livelihood (*samma ajiva*)
6. Right Effort (*samma vayama*)
7. Right Mindfulness (*samma sati*)
8. Right Concentration (*samma samadhi*)

PRINTED BY PRAXIS PRESS PO BOX 371 CAMMERAY 2062.

Zen Buddhist Studies.

Bibliography: these are a few of the huge number of books about Zen –

Title.	Author	Publisher
1.The Way of Zen	Alan Watts	Penguin
2.Zen Enlightenment	Heinrich Dumoulin	Weatherhill
3.Zen Flesh, Zen Bones.	Ed Paul Reps	Pelican
4.The Diamond Sutra & the Sutra of Hui-Neng	Trans A.F.Price	Shambala
* 5.Zen Mind,Beginners Mind	Shunrukyu Suzuki	Weatherhill
6.Introduction to Zen Buddhism	D.T. Suzuki	(Unknown Pub)
7.Zen & the Birds of Appetite	Thomas Merton	
8.Thomas Merton on Zen	Thomas Merton	Sheldon Press
9.To Meet the Real Dragon	Gudo Wafu Nishijima	Windbell
10.Zen and Reality	Robert Powell	Penguin
11.Zen: Dawn in the West	Roshi Philip Kapleau	Rider

Of these books, "Zen Mind, Beginners Mind" (no.5) is highly recommended. If you only read one book on Zen, make it this one.

D.T. Suzuki (6) was a pioneer Zen scholar who did the most to open up this area of understanding to the Western mind. His books are numerous and are generally good, although some are quite difficult reading.

"Zen Flesh, Zen Bones" is a delightful book, a perennial classic, and nearly always available in cheap paperpack. Well worth having.

"HAVING NO HEAD" DOUGLAS HARDING

"ZEN & ENGLISH LITERATURE" R.H. BLYTHE

V. GOOD PETER MATTHIESSEN

NINE HEADED DRAGON RIVER

BLUE CLIFF RECORDS SNOW LEOPARD

FLAMINGO.

Medium Stop
6"x½" Chart
Glue.

Mahayana - the Greater Vehicle.

Today the Buddhist world is characterized by two differing approaches to the Dharma, known generally as "Mahayana" and "Hinayana".

Geographically, the Hinayana school is represented by the monastic orders extant in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, and South East Asia generally, while the Mahayana teachings hold sway in Tibet, China, Japan and North East Asia generally.

The terms "Maha" and "Hina" [Yana] mean "Greater" and "Lesser", respectively. Therefore, adherents of the latter school regard the term "Hinayana" as pejorative, and prefer to be known as "Theravadins" (which means "Exponents of the Doctrine of the Elders, referring to the "original teaching").

Criticisms of the Hinayana.

As the Buddhist tradition became extablished in India and the sorrounding countries, it became more fixed in its outlook, more concerned with the formal observance of the Vinaya, and more concentrated on doctrinal formulations of the truth than with the ineffable realization of Nirvana. This gave rise to literalism, conformism, scholasticism, and sophistry, together with a certain kind of spiritual individualism and elitism.

Looking at these factors in turn:

- As we have seen, the *Abhidhamma*, which was the psychological and philosophical component of the Teaching, was developed and systematized very early in the Buddhist age. Typical of the *Abhidhamma* type of analysis is the formulation of the *Khanddas* or aggregates of being.

- Now the *Abhidhamma* is a type of compendium of psychological facts. These are provided in order to help the aspirant to understand the nature of his or her being. But soon, the *Abhidhamma* came to be regarded as a kind of absolute truth, a dogmatic formulation of the nature of things.

- Along with this developed a negative conception of Niravana as being merely the cessation of worldy existence. In other words, Buddhist teaching came to be a typical world-denying monasticism, which emphazized only the misery of existence and spoke hardly at all about the positive joy and happiness which characterized the true insight of the Buddha.

- Here the *difference* of Nirvana and Samsara were continually stressed. This was a dualistic conception, not unlike that of Medieval Europe, which saw a complete rupture between worldy life and the attainment of Nirvana. This served to make Nirvana remote from one's actual life, which was full only of transcience and decay.

- The Hinayanists also fell victim to the merely formal observance of the Vinaya, in such a way as to preserve the appearance of virtue. However, as the Sangha became more entrenched and socially respectable, it represented a life of (ironically) social conformism and respectability, quite in contrast to the spirit of renunciation which informed the early Sangha.

- Last but not least, the ideal of the Arahant came to be questioned, cheifly because of its individualistic approach to the problems of spiritual life. The monks began to be seen as people only concerned with their own salvation, and were in this sense selfish.

The Emergence of the Mahayana.

The Mahayana arose as a *critique* of the scholasticism and formalism of the the earlier schools of Buddhism. Where these schools stressed the reality of the various elements (or *dhammas*), the Mahayanists returned to the pivotal Buddhist teaching of *Sunyata*, or emptiness.

Now the precedent for the teaching lies in two areas: firstly, as a *positive* implication of the teaching of the *insubstantiality* of all conditioned things (i.e. all things are lacking *essence* or *own-being*); and secondly, as the implications of the Buddha's "Noble Silence" with regards to certain categories of questions.

The Abhidhammist tends to overlook the first point by ascribing a real existence to the *khanddas*, etc. They taught that though the *person* may be "unreal" the *elements* were fundamental.

This teaching was criticised - and in fact totally repudiated - by Nagarjuna, the brilliant dialectician. Nagarjuna in his *Madhyamikasastras* (i.e. "Texts of the Middle Way") promulgated a radical rejection of the scholastic dogmatism formulated by the Hinayanists. Nagarjuna, often misunderstood as a nihilist, was in the eyes of many commentators (both Eastern and Western) the greatest academic philosopher ever to have lived. He showed that every view (*drsti*) was merely an instrument or expedient promulgated for the sake of beings. He also showed that no system of constructive metaphysics was tenable by the use of his opponents arguments against themselves (*prasangam* or *reduction ad absurdum*).

After the Buddha's decease he began to be seen as a being who was more than human. (See Schuman - Buddhism - an Outline of its Teaching and its Schools - p98)

The Doctrine of the Tri-Kaya: the Dharmakaya ("Body of Edifying Truth") of which the Buddhas are an incarnation; the Sambhogakaya ("Body of Bliss"), the realm of the transcendent beings only visible to the wisdom eye; and the Nirmanakaya ("Body of Manifestation")

The identity of Nirvana and Samsara.

The most radical step taken by the Mahayanists was the identification of Nirvana and Samsara: that "Nirvana grasped (i.e. clung to) is Samsara, and Samsara released (i.e. no longer clung to) is Nirvana.

This teaching, first elucidated by the great philosopher and sage Nagarjuna in his *Madhyamikasastras* (i.e. "Texts of the Middle Way") amounted to a radical rejection of the scholastic dogmatism formulated by the Hinayanists. Nagarjuna, often misunderstood as a nihilist, was in the eyes of many commentators (both Eastern and Western) the greatest academic philosopher ever to have lived. He showed that every view (*drsti*) was merely an instrument or expedient promulgated for the sake of beings. He also showed that no system of constructive metaphysics was tenable by the use of his opponents arguments against themselves (*prasangam* or *reduction ad absurdum*).

One of the radical implications of this argument (it is not a view, as it repudiates all views!) is that the distinction between *Nirvana* and *Samsara* is not real: that it is a product of the ignorant mind. (In Western terms, one could say to him that is pure, all things are pure; or, To see the world in a grain of sand...)

In order to grasp this, the teaching of the *Two Truths* must be appreciated: the mundane truth, as that xhown by science; the supreme truth, grapsed intuitively by *prajna*.

The *Prajnaparamita Sutras* and the nature of Wisdom.

(For a detailed description of this teaching see:
T.R.V. Murti – The Central Philosophy of Buddhism, George Allen & Unwin;
and:
K. Venkata Ramanan – The Philosophy of Nagarjuna, Motilal Benarsadis.)

The Prajnaparamita Sutras: A Reading from the Diamond Sutra.

NEGATIVE SEEKING.

The Mosman Evening College.

An Introduction to Buddhism

Jonathan Shearman B.A.

The Pratitya-Samutpada.

THE CHAIN OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION.
FROM "THE TIBETAN BOOK OF THE GREAT LIBERATION" ED W.Y. EVANTZ WENTZ.

**Upon ignorance depends Karma;
Upon Karma depends consciousness;
Upon consciousness depends name & form;
Upon name and form depend the six sense organs;
Upon the six sense organs depend contact;
Upon contact depends sensation;
Upon sensation depends desire;
Upon desire depends attachment;
Upon attachment depends existence;
Upon existence depends birth;
Upon birth depend old age, death, sorrow,
lamentation, misery, grief and despair.
Thus does the entire aggregation of misery arise.**

THE FOLLOWING IS A CHANT IN THE PALI LANGUAGE WHICH EXPRESSES THE TRUTH OF THE CHAIN OF DEPENDENT CAUSATION:
FROM "A SURVEY OF BUDDHISM" BY SANGARAKSHITA

Imasmim sati, idam hoti, imass uppada, idam uppajjati; imasmim asati, idam na hoti; imassa nirodha, idam nirujjhati.

("THIS BEING, THAT BECOMES; FROM THE ARISING OF THIS, THAT ARISES;
THIS NOT BECOMING, THAT DOES NOT BECOME; FROM THE CEASING OF THIS, THAT CEASES")

PRAXIS PRESS P.O. BOX 371 CAMMERAY 2062.

cosmic consciousness.
R.M. Bucke

"THE RAFT"
"THE ARROW"

An Introduction to Buddhism (cont).

The Five Aggregates of Being.

According to Buddhist teaching, the human being can be understood in terms of the following physical & psychological components, known as the *khanda* (or Sanskrit *skandha*) meaning literally "heaps" or "aggregates". They are:

The *khanda* of "body" (rupa)
The *khanda* of "sensation" (vedana)
The *khanda* of "perception" (sanna)
The *khanda* of "mental phenomena" (sankhara)
The *khanda* of "consciousness" (vinnana)

Buddhist thought rejects the existence of an "essence" beyond these components; they therefore provide an exhaustive description of Human Being.

The Three Marks of (Conditioned) Existence.

With regards to any existing thing or condition the following can be observed: it displays the characteristics of *annica* ("impermanence"), *anatta* ("self-less-ness"), and *dukkha* ("unsatisfactoriness").

The Five Precepts.

1. Refraining from the destruction of living creatures.
2. Refraining from taking that which is not given.
3. Refraining from sexual misconduct.
4. Refraining from wrong. SPEECH
5. Refraining from intoxicating drugs & liqours.

The Three Poisons.

The "wheel of suffering" is turned by the influence of hatred (*dosa*), greed (*lobha*) and delusion (*moha*). These also can be understood in terms of *craving* and *ignorance*.

The Three Division of the Pali Canon.

1. The *Suttapitaka:*

These are the remembered utterances of the Buddha, usually prefaced by the term "Thus I have Heard..."
They are divided into the *Dighanikaya, Majjhimanikaya, Samyuttanikaya, Anguttaranikaya,* and *Khuddakanikaya.*

"DHAMMAPADA" — PENGUIN CLASSIC

2. The *Vinayapitaka.*

The *Vinayapitaka* comprises the monastic discipline and rules.

3. The *Abbhidhammapitaka.*

This comprises the scholastic application of Buddhist theory to problems of philosophy and psychology.

"BUDDHIST SCRIPTURES" — PENGUIN.

An Introduction to Buddhism (cont); 27/2/89.

The "Doctrine of Elements" from the *Abhidamma* (cont.)

These elements include the *khandas*, which were discussed last week. However, another idea which is present in the Abhidhamma teachings is the "doctrine of momentary existences". (see "To Meet the Real Dragon", p175 *passim*).

The Six Types of Persons.

(See Penguin "Buddhist Scriptures" ed. E. Conze, Pp116-121).

Some readings from the *Dhammapada*.

Types of Meditation.

In the *Theravadin* schools, two main types of meditation practise are taught.

The first is *samatha* meditation, which aims to produce a state of tranquility. This is often practised with the help of a *coloured disc* which is placed in the line of sight. The gaze is held on this disc, and then the eyes are closed to contemplate the after-image that is left on the retina.

In theory, it is important to master these kinds of concentration exercises before passing on to *vipassana* or "insight" meditation. *Vipassana* meditation is generally taught by the S.E. Asian Buddhists, and finds its basis in the ancient Buddhist teachings of the importance of "watchfulness" & "mindfulness"; the state of "passive awareness", and of "watching without the watcher".

The Fruits of Meditation.

One who successfully realises the Buddhist discipline is graded as either a "Stream Winner", a "Once Returner", a "Never Returner", or an Arahant. (See Sangharikshita, A Survey of Buddhism, [Shambala], Pp 165-168)

Some readings from Soyen Shaku.

27

Buried Treasure - a Parable.

There was this bloke trying to swap a little cloth bag for something precious. The little cloth bag was plain and dull-looking, and besides it was heavy; it had something in it. So he went around the market, trying to swap it for something good.

But no-one wanted it; it was plain, dull and heavy. Finally he found a man who seemed interested. "Except," said the man, "why don't you open the little bag and see what is in it?" "I know there's nothing in it," was the answer; "I've had this bag all my life and its just plain and dull and heavy. Nothing to see there. But this market-place has lots of great stuff in it, overseas stuff and mysterious stuff. That's the stuff I want. This bag is just boring."

"I'm afraid I must insist that you look in your bag," said the man. "Otherwise," he said, "I shall be forced to kill you." And so saying he produced a large sword with a jewelled handle.

So, and really it was the first time, the bloke with the plain, dull, heavy little bag that he'd always had, opened it and looked inside it. He knew there was nothing there, of course, but the man with the sword looked dangerous. Anyway, he opened the bag and...there was something in it. What was it? So this was what made the bag heavy. It had a kind of lustre to it. He held it carefully between thumb and forefinger. What was it? It was dusty and he couldn't make out the shape...

"So", said the man with the sword. "There is something in there, after all." The bloke with the bag said: "But I can't make out what it is. Can you tell me what it is?"

"If you can't tell me what it is, I am afraid I will have to kill you!" said the man. And he obviously meant it.

And so he looked at it again. He cradled it in the palm of his hand. He polished it in the hem of his coat. Slowly the realization dawned. "My God" he said. "It's a diamond. It's a bloody enormous diamond. I've been walking around this market place, trying to swap a bloody great diamond for some bit of costume jewelry. Oh thank you!" He turned to face the man with sword. "Oh thank you so much!" But the man was gone. He was alone in the market place.

STORY BY JPS. PRINTED BY PRAXIS PRESS PO BOX 371 CAMMERAY 2062.